

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EB-07 AGR-05 COME-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00

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FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6726

INFO AMCONSUL LENINGRAD

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E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: EAGR, PINT, UR

SUBJECT: SIBERIAN FOOD SUPPLY SITUATION

REF: MOSCOW 8785

1. BEGIN SUMMARY. DURING TWO-DAY VISIT TO IRKUTSK AND LAKE BAIKAL JULY 19-20, EMBOFFS VISITED IRKUTSK CENTRAL MARKET. MEAT SUPPLY VERY LIMITED IN VARIETY AND QUANTITY. FRUITS AND VEGETABLES WERE PLENTIFUL BUT EXPENSIVE. MEAT NOT AVAILABLE AT LAKE BAIKAL HOTEL DINING ROOM JULY 19. END SUMMARY.

2. EMBOFFS VISITED IRKUTSK CENTRAL MARKET AT 1600 TUESDAY, JULY 20. BEEF WAS NOT ON SALE WHEN EMBOFF'S ENTERED MARKET, BUT WENT ON SALE 15-20 MINUTES LATER. SUPPLY WAS VERY LIMITED, BUT OF GOOD QUALITY. LINE FORMED IMMEDIATELY OF APPROXIMATELY 15-20 PEOPLE. A LIMITED SUPPLY OF PORK WAS ON SALE, AND PORK FAT WAS PLENTIFUL AND SOLD FOR 3.50 PER KILO. MUTTON, CHICKEN, EGGS, AND BUTTER WERE NOT OBSERVED. BEEF SPLEENS WERE ON SALE FOR 46 KOPECKS PER KILO. LINES OF 15-20 PEOPLE WERE OBSERVED FOR BOTH PORK AND BEEF SPLEENS.

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2. WIDE VARIETY OF FRUITS AVAILABLE AND NO LINES OBSERVED.
APPLES SOLD FOR R 2 TO 2.50 PER KILO; APRICOTS,
R 5 (SMALL AND GREEN, LIMITED QUANTITY); SOUR CHERRIES,
R 4; CONCORD-TYPE GRAPES, R 5; HONEYDEW MELON, R 3 FOR
800 GRAMS; PEARS, R 5; PLUMS, NO PRICE LISTED (BUT GREEN
AND SOUR); WATERMELON, R 5; WILD STRAWBERRIES, R 0.50
PER GLASS (APPROXIMATELY 1 CUP). OVER RIPE BANANAS
AND SOME SMALL ORANGES WERE SEEN IN SHOPPING BAGS OF
PEOPLE ON STREET, BUT WERE NOT AVAILABLE AT THE MARKET ITSELF.

3. GOOD SUPPLY OF VEGETABLES OBSERVED AND ONLY LINE
OBSERVED WAS FOR POTATOES. ONIONS, DILL, BEETS, GARLIC
AND CABBAGE ALL AVAILABLE IN ADEQUATE QUANTITIES.
CUCUMBERS SOLD FOR R 2.20 PER KILO; TOMATOES (EITHER
UNDER OR OVER RIPE), R 1.50 TO 2.50; RADISHES, R 0.30
FOR 10; NEW CARROTS, R 0.25 FOR 6 SMALL; POTATOES WERE QUITE
SMALL AND SOLD AT ONLY ONE STAND OUTSIDE MARKET.

4. DURING LUNCH AND DINNER AT LAKE BAIKAL HOTEL DINING
ROOM JULY 19 MEAT WAS NOT AVAILABLE ALTHOUGH LISTED
ON MENU. MATLOCK

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